

## **THE 400-ACRE FIRE THAT NEVER WAS ANCILLARY BENEFIT TO FUELS PROJECT**

Dan Washington, Wildland Urban Interface Coordinator for the Salt Lake Field Office BLM was pleasantly surprised to receive a phone call from a volunteer fireman representing a small town close to a hazardous fuels reduction project recently implemented. The fireman described how efficient and safe the recent thinning project made his job; he was able to drive right up to the burning tree with his brush truck, douse the tree that had been struck by lightning and be home by suppertime. The thinning combined with the expedited response time kept the Harris-Hollow fire at a single tree incident.

“Now that’s job satisfaction,” exclaimed Washington. Washington continues, “You know, I’m always happy to hear when my work makes a difference. I could just picture the firefighter’s delight and confidence being able to safely enter, or exit, the area in his brush truck.”

The reporting firefighter was sure that without the fuels treatment implemented the fire would have quickly grown from a single tree incident to an over 400-acre, high intensity crown fire. The tree itself was a two stump tree with multiple stems, the fire was quick to move from one stump to the other, but was contained to a single tree incident due to hazardous fuels reduction efforts in the area.

Firefighter accessibility is the bonus benefit we at the SLFO did not forecast. The goal of the Home Ranch project was to manage the existing fire risk to the Home Ranch community by reducing fuels (juniper) in order to lessen the potential damage and intensity of wildland fire. In the rural areas like Woodruff, resources are limited and livelihoods are often a direct correlation with the health of the land.

**Contact:** Erin Darboven, 801-977-4328 or [erin\\_darboven@blm.gov](mailto:erin_darboven@blm.gov)